

THE HOUSTON DAILY POST.

Houston Printing Company.

By this
Houston Printing Company.
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G. J. PALMER, Vice-President.
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HOUSTON, SUNDAY, DEC. 26, 1897.

EXPERIENCED MEN NEEDED.

The retention of a democrat at the Chinese court as the representative of this country through one republican administration and the announcement that he will be kept at his post for some time to come is complimentary to Mr. Denby, but it shows, too, the necessity for a wide reform in our present diplomatic system. Mr. Denby has been in China long enough to have become far more useful than could be expected from any new man. He has learned Chinese and Chinese methods and customs. He is acquainted with the diplomatic issues between China, the United States and Europe and has become especially acceptable to the Chinese government. No minister can prove of use to his country until he has reached such a position at the court to which he is accredited. To replace our representative so often that they virtually remain strangers to their duties and devoid of influence, is a policy dangerous to our best interests. No other nation of any consequence pursues such a plan. The great powers train their diplomats as we train soldiers, while we oppose to such regular the rawest of recruits.

If the civil service rules are valuable at home and in other branches of government work, as tending to give us merit and experience in public affairs, they are doubly necessary for our diplomatic arm. True, we do not affect a foreign policy that would mix us with the interminable scheming for added power and territory that actuates other governments, but we have immense interests at stake abroad. We are becoming scattered over the world to such an extent that we are being drawn into the whirlpool of international complications whether we will or not. Instead of hearing concern talk of limiting the operations of the civil service law we should rather hear of its proposed extension, at least to include our diplomatic corps so that we could always be represented abroad by men of ability and long experience—men capable of holding their own against the veteran representatives of other countries. Mr. Denby's case becomes an object lesson.

A VITIATED PUBLIC TASTE.

A noteworthy illustration of the deterioration of public taste with reference to the drama and the growth of the demand for the spectacular, the comic and the sensational, was exhibited in the patronage bestowed in this city last week upon two widely differing attractions. During the earlier part of the week there was a thoroughly capable company of actors to be seen at the opera house in a class of dramas that were universally popular only a few years ago—society and romantic plays of a high order of merit. In addition to such attractions as a strong company and beautiful play, the price of admission to the choice seats in the house was but 30 cents. The audience did not half fill the parquette. Succeeding this company there was a "hodge-podge" show, excellent of its kind. It is true, but made up of burlesques, ballets, songs and dances. It was a mixture of exhibitions of shapely female anatomy, fun and horse-play, and the price of admission to the parquette was \$1.50! Was there a good audience? The house was filled from pit to gallery. The success of the trashy extravaganza, with which the stage is overrun at the present time, is the excuse for their production. The public taste is skillfully catered to by the theatrical managers, and only those attractions are multiplied that catch the popular fancy. The secret is often expressed by the more intelligent people that the "good old dramas" have been so generally abandoned, but the fault is not with the theatrical profession, but with the public. Popular taste has become vitiated to such an extent that only a celebrity can draw out of the usual line of the rough farce, the racy and naughty skit, or the spectacular production. The larger cities, and notably New York, are responsible for this debasement of the stage. A metropolitan success in these days must be novel and questionable, as a general thing, or the dressing and mounting and realism of the play must be on a scale that can not be reproduced on the road. Whatever comes to us heralded properly and truthfully "as a New York success" draws crowded houses, while more meritorious attractions are starved out. The big theatrical trust is exerting a baneful influence, also, upon the stage—cutting the character of attractions and the supply of talent in order to increase the trust profits. Whether there will ever be seen a theatrical realness taking us up to a higher plane once more of public amusement, I cannot say, but there is no question now that the stage is being prostituted, and that it is done because a vitiated public taste encourages it.

HAWLEY AND THE GERMAN-AMERICANS.

The LaGrange Journal notices the report from Washington that Representative Hawley of the Tenth Texas district will pass over the German-American element in that district and obtain the richest plums for Henry Ferguson and a man named Lee of Galveston—the former to be revenue collector and the latter collector of the port of Galveston.

In this connection the Journal remarks that Mr. Hawley was elected through the support of the German-American citizens of Fayette, Austin, Colorado and Lavaca counties and declares that without this vote the Galveston man would have stood little show of election. It becomes interesting for the German-Americans in the Tenth district to inquire, therefore, of Mr. Hawley as to what returns for their support he and his party are giving them. It was argued by the Galveston candidate for congress last year that the defeat of the democracy meant restored confidence, the free and enlarged use of Eastern money in Southern development, good prices for crops and a new era of prosperity.

The Post puts it to these German-Americans who were influenced by these promises whether a single campaign pledge of the republican-gold bug party has been redeemed? Has money been more plentiful in the Tenth congressional district under the McKinley regime? Have prices for crops been better? Has not cotton continued to go down under the continued gold standard and security of money until it is below 5 cents? Have the German-Americans been remembered by appointment to lucrative offices? In a word, do they not begin to see that Mr. Hawley and the republican gold standard party have deceived the large farming element in the Tenth congressional district of Texas and, indeed, in the West and South where republican votes were cast in any considerable number?

How much longer will men with the sound practical sense with which the German-American farmers are credited, be content to assist in upholding a financial system that is putting their cotton down to 4 cents, and other crops to a figure that scarcely pays for raising them, unless there be a food crop failure abroad?

The class mentioned in the Journal may not seek not even care for office, but the failure to bestow lucrative positions upon them would be none the less an act of ingratitude on Mr. Hawley's part.

Now that no election is pending is the time for such citizens as the German-Americans of the Tenth district, who voted to maintain republican policy, to sit down quietly and ask in what single particular have they been benefited by so doing.

REED'S PROPOSED SCHEME.

The National senate acts with far more independence and liberality, generally, in the matter of appropriations than the house, and it is the rule that the house bills are sent back from the senate with large additions, amounting often to reckless extravagance.

The present autocratic speaker of the house proposes, it is said, to discipline the senate this session in the direction indicated. The policy of the republican house is now to cut off even needed appropriations in order to meet as far as possible the growing deficit. The majority sentiment in the senate in favor of free silver will have little in common with the house, or the administration, when it comes to bolstering up the present financial system and staving off the treasury and will hardly be found assisting Messrs. McKinley and Gage out of a hole. The house appropriations, therefore, will be enlarged as usual through senate "riders," and it is Mr. Reed's scheme to deny the senate the right to tack on any new items to the house bills.

Under the rules in the house, amendments proposing new items are disposed of on points of order, as no germane to the bill, and Mr. Reed would have the rule so amended as to include senate riders in the same way and for the same reason. Such an amendment would strike at a practice followed for years by the senate and acquiesced in by the house, and it is very certain that the senate will resent the house's action in the premises and teach the big speaker that the senate is somewhat stubborn and autocratic itself. The country can, therefore, expect a lively and prolonged parliamentary battle in the event Mr. Reed pursues the tactics threatened.

The matter is one of great significance just now to the country at large. There are appropriations for great public improvements, to be asked that ought to be granted, but which the house will be disposed to push aside. To the senate then the interested sections will have to appeal and, in all probability, with success. In the struggle ensuing the popular sentiment of the country would be, in consequence of the public's necessities in the various premises, likely to stand by the senate and compel Mr. Reed at last to give way. The house's proposed action is too palpably designed for partisan purposes to command general respect or endorsement.

The Kansas City Times truthfully says: "The gigantic wheat duel between Letter and Armour at Chicago is no more business than the desperate play of gamblers. So far from doing any good it really injures business by unsettling prices, by tying up millions in unproductive operations, and by tempting other men to abandon legitimate industry for wild speculation."

What is this—two men and a woman arrested to Brooklyn for fraudulently drawing a pension? Who can be guilty of this discriminative persecution?

The Spaniards are making all the capital possible out of the execution of Rials by the insurgents. Unfortunately they are finding American papers here and there that are dead easy to bunco and ready to assist them in diverting public attention from the villainous outrages committed almost daily by the Spanish in Cuba.

It is said this year's toys for children are far more warlike and jingoish than

PRISON MANAGEMENT.

Austin, Texas, December 25.—(Staff Special.)—Much was said during the prison congress recently held in this city in praise of the so-called advanced penitentiary systems with which Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Minnesota are experimenting, but the delegates from those States skillfully avoided comparison with the more practical penitentiary institutions maintained in other parts of the country. They were willing enough to talk about "evolutionary" methods and to enlarge upon the development of psychological phenomena the production of which, to their minds, should be the purpose of the up-to-date prison superintendent, yet they persistently declined to accept the invitation of Warden Starke of the Missouri State penitentiary to discuss the convict question from the standpoint of the prisoner and the taxpayer alike. In Missouri the contract system prevails under State supervision. The prisoners are worked in shops within the walls and the institution is more than self-supporting, having made money under Mr. Starke's management, as well as having acquired the reputation of being one of the best conducted prisons in the United States. Its inmates are humanely treated, as was shown by good and sufficient evidence, although subject to corporal punishment in extreme cases, and their lot is about as pleasant as that of the patrons of the more aesthetic hostiles maintained farther East, while the taxpayer is relieved of the burden of their support. And this latter fact is a most important one, for no solution of the convict question can be considered acceptable or satisfactory wherein the taxpayer's interest has not been protected.

He pays for the outfit of the judicial machinery maintained for the protection of society against law breakers and it is but justice that after the latter have been convicted they should be so handled as to make them pay their own way during the period of their incarceration. But this can be done without necessarily making their lives a living hell, as is the case in some of the most successful of the new school of prison reformers, composed mainly of emotional female prison evangelists, professional humanitarians and lachrymose socialists, assert that crime is bred by an environment and that the transfer of a criminal from his daily haunts to one of the model penitentiaries of which they dream is sufficient to cure him of his evil habits. The experience of the States which have adopted their theories does not sustain them in this, however, or it would have been more readily given before the late prison congress. All the talk that was made there about the "gentlemen convicts" of Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts and elsewhere failed to drown the issue. The fact remained that crime is as rampant where "ideal" prisons are maintained as elsewhere and it could not be successfully denied that the costly prison experiments which are being made by some States are in reality a waste of money, though not entirely devoid of some benefit to the inmates, in the way of simple tax-eating devices, in excuse of which practical results from any standpoint can not be shown.

Old time crooks and professional criminals who figure on spending half their lives in durango ville are ardent admirers of the Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania systems, and it is in evidence that they give but little trouble after being locked up in those States. But one prison experience does not cure them. It is as easy to serve a term out and the good time along with the inmates of an old-fashioned penitentiary as it is to obey the rules in force and self-discipline the show of reform required of them, and return once, twice or often three times, a residence in jail having become a pleasure rather than a punishment in the eyes of the inmates. The inmates of the North and East are self-supporting. The prison economies of delegates from Ohio, Pennsylvania and other model prison States were fully aware of the existence of the above recited conditions of affairs, hence the reluctance with which they approached the prison question whenever insistence was made that the psychological side of the matter be turned towards the wall for awhile.

Incidentally Texas penitentiary affairs were discussed during the congress and a splendid showing was made as long as talk on this subject was confined to conditions prevailing at Rusk and Huntsville. The Texas delegates condemned it themselves and told of the efforts they have made to have it abolished—efforts which have failed because of the indifference of legislators as well as of the people at large, many of whom are in the habit of allowing themselves to be misled by the demagogues and trouble-making essayists, to govern them when given an opportunity to vote upon propositions that contemplated the withdrawing of means for the purpose of the hands of those who are spending their labor and of providing places for working them on State account. It was made clear that none of the odium of the lease system in the last few years and the efficient and remarkably progressive gentlemen who are charged with the management of the Texas penal institutions, they having done everything possible under existing circumstances to reduce its horrors, but the fact remained that Texas has some of the most backward and inefficient prison reform and hesitates in the matter of abandoning one of the most barbarous methods known for the handling of convicts without the exercise of necessity even for the farming out of convicts, which has been fruitful of nothing but shame and reproach.

Thanks to the splendid work of the men who are now managing the State penitentiaries, though it is possible that the lease system was gradually being abandoned even without assistance from the legislature and other sources. A comfortable balance has been accumulated in the penitentiary treasury in the last few years and the penitentiary board is considering the advisability of purchasing additional lands and enlarging the State's penal farm holdings. By this method the penal farm would be able to employ the surplus convict population and so be relieved of the necessity of renting several thousand of its miserable charges to planters to be herded and driven like beasts and subordinated to the whims of a brutalized and unscrupulous class. The board's experiment will be watched with interest and every sincere friend of genuine prison reform and practical prison management will wish its members rodeoed in their attempt to get rid of the remaining disgrace in the Texas penitentiary department.

L. A. P.

Ready for All Emergencies.

Lampasas Leader.

A. C. Jones, a veteran and a gentleman, was a pleasant caller at this office Tuesday evening. He brought the office some of the best produce and of some of the best groceries made in the country. We may be compelled to live on pumpkins, sweet potatoes and butter, which would not be altogether so bad as upon skins and hoop poles.

SOME POSTSCRIPTS.

More boys die in infancy than girls.

The first portable clock was made in 1530.

A gull can fly at the rate of 100 miles an hour.

In Greenland potatoes never get larger than marbles.

A heart without love is like a violin without strings.

The Bell Telephone company rents 504, 618 telephones.

Paris gardeners buy tools for use as insect destroyers.

In Cheshire about 31,000 tons of cheese are made annually.

The castle of Heidelberg is the largest in Germany.

The clock in Westminster Abbey is the largest in the world.

The colder the climate the greater the size of the human brain.

There are thirty-two cities in Austria with populations exceeding 20,000.

The pope can speak English, German, Italian and French perfectly.

The German government proposes to try to grow potatoes in Africa.

It only takes three cases out of ten the sight is equalled by a man's hair turns gray five years earlier than a woman's.

Browning, in his later years, drew \$10,000 a year from the sale of his works.

Naturalists say that, in proportion to their size, spiders are seven times as strong as lions.

Before the reformation 50 per cent of the land in the United Kingdom belonged to the church.

In Russia and Switzerland the government has monopoly in the sale of spirituous liquors.

Cretan olive groves were injured to the extent of \$10,000,000 during the recent troubles on the island.

POINTS ABOUT PEOPLE.

The Dean of St. Asaph delighted a London crowd recently by springing after him a pickpocket and catching him.

Robert Barr, the novelist, who was arrested at Sweden, a part of Asiatic Turkey, November, has arrived in London and made formal complaint at the foreign office.

Lieutenant Olofson, the Danish explorer, will next year fit out a new expedition to the Pamir regions in order to make geographical and ethnological investigations.

A collection of 276 letters by and to Sir Philip Francis, after being offered in one block for 500 guineas in London, was sold at auction, the separate lots bringing a total of \$2150.

Dr. Marie Louise Benoit, who has just been appointed medical interne in the New York State Craig colony for epileptics, at Sonoma, is the first woman called to that service in that State.

Prince Oscar of Sweden, who some time ago gave up his royal rank to marry Miss Ebba Munk and is now known as Count of Wisborg, has decided to go to Africa as a missionary, together with his wife.

H. S. Townsend, who fought in the Black Hawk war when he was 18 years old, and was a lifelong and intimate friend of Lincoln and Grant, is living at Maryville, Mo., hale and hearty, at the age of 83 years.

A new issue of postage stamps will be made in Holland to commemorate the coronation of the young queen next year. Professor Stang has been commissioned to paint her portrait, which will be used as a copy for these stamps.

Elizabeth Rider Wheaton, the well-known prison evangelist, has visited every prison in every important city in the world. She has become known to most railroad men and is now passing over all the large lines in this country.

Lord Dorchester, the grandson of Sir Guy Carleton, who commanded the British forces in Canada in the war of the revolution, has just died without male heirs. The title, which was granted in consideration of services against the American colonists, becomes therefore extinct.

Will Attract Settlers.

Centerville Democrat.

The Houston Fruit, Flower and Vegetable display was simply grand, and to the visitors from the frozen North especially was a wonderful and amazing sight, to see all kinds of vegetables and fruits in season at this time of year and flowers in full bloom. The display will no doubt prove worth the thousands of dollars to Houston and the coast country in the way of attracting settlers from the North to come to Texas to invest their money and make homes among us.

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Charles A. Edwards, the new Washington correspondent of The Houston Post, fits the position "young like de paper on de wall," and is doing some very satisfactory work for his paper. Charlie is a hustler from the bifurcation of Houston creek, and if there is anything to be had as a reward for energetic and persistent reportorial labor, he is sure to get his share of it.

Growing More Enterprising.

Groesbeck Journal.

The Houston Post is growing more and more enterprising and metropolitan. Its Sunday edition consisted of fifty-two pages, including a four-page colored cover. There is not a paper published north of Mason and Dixon's line in a city five times the size of Houston that has such a paper as The Post.

The Biggest and Best.

Corsicana Democrat.

The Houston Post of last Sunday was the biggest and best paper ever issued in Texas. The Democrat hopes that The Post may continue to prosper and celebrate each Sabbath with big editions, filled to the brim with good reading matter.

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CLOCKS.

Church and tower clocks cost from \$300 up.

The first portable clock was made in 1530.

Originally clock wheels were three feet in diameter.

Repeating clocks were invented by Barlow about 1670.

There was a striking clock in Westminster Abbey in 1638.

The invention of the escapement is ascribed to Gerbert, 1000 A. D.

Most of our clocks are made in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York.

What are probably the finest clocks made in this country come from Boston.

Previous to the setting up of a clock at



LEWIS GEORGE CLARK, THE ORIGINAL OF UNCLE TOM.

LAST SUNDAY'S POST.

Nothing to Equal It.

LaGrange Journal.

Sunday's edition of The Houston Post was a magnificent effort in journalism, covering fifty-two pages, with illustrated cover in colors. We have never seen anything to equal it among the papers of this section of our country. The merchants and business men of Houston make such enterprise not only possible, but profitable, by showing their appreciation in furnishing lavish advertising patronage to the great daily. There is no "old fashioned" among the business men of the metropolis of South Texas. We congratulate The Post upon this splendid effort and commend it for the enterprise and energy exhibited. May it continue to prosper.

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